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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER ROLES

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Psychology
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, Kentucky

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

By
Amanda Michelle Hutchins

May 2009

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOAL
ORIENTATION AND GENDER ROLES

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOAL
ORIENTATION AND GENDER ROLES

Amanda Hutchins May 2009

Directed by: Anthony Paquin, Steven Wininger, Reagan Brown

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This study was designed to examine the relationship between a person's goal orientation and the gender roles that they adopt. The relationship between gender and goal orientation has been studied for years, but the results have been inconclusive. Some studies find a gender difference and some studies do not. For this reason, this study examined if there was another factor that was influencing goal orientations that was related to gender.

Goal orientations are perceptual-cognitive frameworks for how individuals approach, interpret, and respond to achievement situations. Gender roles are the behaviors, thoughts, and emotions that are considered acceptable and appropriate for each gender based on society and culture.

Four hundred and seventy two participants answered an online questionnaire assessing their goal orientation and gender role identification. The participants answered questions using the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scale and the Bem's Sex Role Inventory.

Overall, the results showed that higher masculinity leads to a higher motivation to succeed, and higher femininity leads to a higher motivation to avoid failure.

The Relationship Between Goal Orientation and Gender Roles

Goal orientation is a theory that has typically been applied in educational or achievement settings to determine how students, mainly adolescents, learn best (Anderman & Young, 1994; Middleton & Midgley, 1997; Patrick, Ryan, & Pintrich, 1999). Only recently has goal orientation been applied to work settings. In these settings certain goal orientations have been shown to play an important role in organizations in relation to training (Towler & Dipboye, 2001), organizational and individual learning (Fisher & Ford, 1998), feedback (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997), and effectiveness (Phillips & Gully, 1997).

When gender has been measured in relation to goal orientation there has been conflicting results. Half of the studies in this area have found a gender difference, and half of the studies have not. For this study, gender roles, instead of gender, were measured. Gender roles, and gender stereotypes, have been a huge part of the American society and culture for many years. The gender roles that people adopt, regardless of their actual gender, could have a big effect on their goal orientation. This study examines the relationship between goal orientation and gender roles.

Goal Orientation

Goal orientations are perceptual-cognitive frameworks for how individuals approach, interpret, and respond to achievement situations (Janssen & Van Yperen, 2004). In a study by Elliot and Dweck (2005), children of equal ability responded differently when faced with failure on tasks. Some of the children displayed an adaptive mastery response pattern distinguished by attributing failure to insufficient effort, continued positive affect and expectancies, sustained or enhanced persistence and performance, and pursuit of subsequent challenges. Other children

displayed a maladaptive helpless response pattern distinguished by attributing failure to insufficient ability, the onset of negative affect and expectancies, decreases in persistence and performance, and avoidance of any subsequent challenges. From this, the researchers developed two types of goal orientations known as mastery orientation and performance orientation. Mastery orientation is characterized by a person's desire to improve his or her abilities and master the tasks he or she performs for his or her own benefit. A person who is mastery oriented is more concerned with the grasp he or she has on the task at hand than on appearing superior to his or her peers. Performance orientation is characterized by a person's desire to achieve a positive evaluation of his or her current abilities and performance from others. A person who is performance oriented has a strong desire to appear superior to his or her peers.

Past research has shown that performance orientation should be divided into two separate distinctions: performance-approach and performance-avoidance (Anderman & Young, 1994). Performance-approach is the same as the performance orientation described earlier. If, however, people possess a performance-avoidance goal orientation then they avoid tasks at which they think they may fail. So essentially, they avoid failure.

Elliot and Harachiewicz (1996) further defined the differences between each of the goal orientations. According to them, performance-approach and mastery goals are aimed at attaining competence. This focus on competence facilitates task engagement and fosters intrinsic motivation. They stated that when a person is performance-approach oriented or mastery oriented then achievement is a challenge that generates excitement, encourages affective and cognitive investment, facilitates concentration and task absorption, and orients the individual towards success and understanding of relevant information, which are all believed to help foster

intrinsic motivation. Performance-avoidance is aimed at avoiding failure which is harmful to intrinsic motivation. When a person is performance-avoidance oriented , then the achievement is a threat, not a challenge, and the person will actively try to escape the situation, if able. If the person can not escape the situation then the idea of failure can elicit anxiety, encourage withdrawal of affective and cognitive resources, disrupt concentration and task involvement, and orient the individual toward failure-relevant information, which are all harmful to intrinsic motivation. Another study by Middleton and Midgley (1997) looked at the differences between the goal orientations in academic settings. They found that performance-approach is unrelated to academic efficacy and positively related to avoidance behaviors in the classroom and test anxiety. Mastery orientation was the strongest predictor of self-efficacy and self-regulation of learning.

After finding the differences that were inherent in the performance orientation, Elliot and Church (1997) developed the Hierarchical Model of Approach and Avoidance Achievement Motivation. In this model, there are three different, and independent, goal orientations: mastery, performance-approach, and performance-avoidance. Elliot and Church believed that each orientation was linked to at least one of the two relevant motives: achievement motivation (or competence) and fear of failure. Specifically, they found that mastery orientation was linked to achievement motivation, performance-avoidance was linked to fear of failure, and performance-approach was linked to achievement motivation and fear of failure. They also found that mastery orientation and performance-approach were linked to high competence expectancies and performance-avoidance was linked to low competence expectancies. The model also says that achievement goals have an impact on variables like intrinsic motivation and graded performance.

Mastery goals facilitate intrinsic motivation. Performance-approach goals have no effect on intrinsic motivation and no effect on graded performance. Performance-avoidance goals reduce intrinsic motivation and graded performance.

While most of the research regarding goal orientation and gender roles are inconclusive, there are some studies have directly measured the relationship between goal orientation and gender. Middleton and Midgley (1997) had fifth grade students answer a questionnaire that assessed their goal orientation, self-efficacy, and self-regulation of learning. They found that boys adopted performance-approach goals more than girls. Anderman and Young (1994) also examined the relationship between goal orientations and gender. They found that boys adopted performance-approach goals more than girls, and that girls adopted more mastery goals than boys.

Patrick et al. (1999) surveyed seventh and eighth graders at the beginning and end of the school year to determine the gender differences between the two goal orientations and self-regulated learning. In this study, performance orientation was not separated into two distinctions. They found that males were more performance oriented than females, and females used more cognitive strategies. Males who were performance oriented at the beginning of the school year had decreased self-efficacy, did not use much regulatory and cognitive strategies, and the males performance was decreased by the end of the year. When females were performance oriented, none of those outcomes were apparent. When females were mastery oriented at the beginning of the year they had increased self-efficacy, and an increase in the regulatory and cognitive strategies used at the end of the year. When males were mastery oriented there were no apparent positive effects by the end of the year.

Goal Orientation and Organizations

As stated before, certain goal orientations have been shown to play an important role in organizations in relation to training (Towler & Dipboye, 2001), organizational and individual learning (Fisher & Ford, 1998), feedback (VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997), and effectiveness (Phillips & Gully, 1997). To understand how goal orientation is important to organizations I will further explain the studies listed above.

In Towler and Dipboye's (2001) study, 135 participants listened to lectures about organization and trainer expressiveness. Participants took recall and problem solving tests immediately after listening to the lectures and two days after listening to the lectures. Participants had the highest recall after they listened to an expressive and organized lecture. After listening to an organized and inexpressive lecture, participants that were high in mastery orientation performed poorly on the problem solving tests. Participants with a low mastery orientation were not affected by the organization or expressiveness of the lecture. This study helps organization to understand the importance of organization, expressiveness, and goal orientations when conducting training. If you know the mastery orientations of the people in your organizations than you can begin to tailor lectures around them so that they will learn the best. A high mastery oriented person would need an expressive lecturer, but a low mastery oriented person could learn regardless of the organization or expressiveness.

In Fisher and Ford's (1998) study, 121 undergraduate students participated in a learning task and completed a questionnaire. The researchers were trying to determine if the amount of effort trainees' put forth and the trainees' goal orientation affected the trainees' learning. Mastery orientation and time on the task were the strongest predictors of performance on the knowledge

learning outcome. Perceived mental workload and an example during learning were the strongest predictors of performance on the application learning outcomes. Organizations can use this study to understand what should be included in training, and which orientation will help trainee's learning. For example, based on this study, an ideal training session would include examples and appropriate mental workload if the organization wants employees to apply the learning outcomes. Also, guiding employees towards a mastery orientation and ensuring that they spend the appropriate time on the task will lead to the best knowledge performance in a training session.

A longitudinal field study with 44 participants and a scenario study with 239 participants were conducted by VandeWalle and Cummings (1997) to examine the effects of goal orientation on the feedback-seeking process. They found a positive relationship between mastery orientation and feedback seeking and a negative relationship between performance orientation and feedback seeking. Feedback is an important process in organizations. Ideally, all workers would have feedback on their performance on the job so that they are able to work at their best. If an employee seeks out feedback from their superiors then the employee is actively trying to improve at the job. Based on this study, organizations should try to foster a mastery orientation in their employees because then the employee will seek feedback more regularly. If an organization encourages performance orientations in their employees then the employees are less likely to seek out feedback, so then they might not improve at their job.

Phillips and Gully (1997) examined the effects of mastery goal orientation, performance goal orientation, and self efficacy on self-set goals and performance on an exam. They controlled for an individual's ability, locus of control, and need for achievement. Mastery goal orientation

correlated positively with the level of goal and self-efficacy. Performance goal orientation correlated negatively with goal level and self-efficacy. They concluded that goal orientation influences the level of the goal through self-efficacy. So, an organization that encourages a mastery goal orientation in their employees is also encouraging higher goals and a higher self-efficacy in their employees.

It is obvious that goal orientation is a theory that is becoming increasingly popular, and important, to organizations. Continued research in this area is important for organizations. If an organization knows what type of goal orientation a person possesses then they can adapt the difficulty and specificity of the goals based on the person. For example, if a person is performance-avoidance oriented, then he or she might perform better when faced with easy goals so that he or she can accomplish the goal and not fear failure. Conversely, if a person is mastery oriented, then he or she might perform better when faced with harder goals so that when the goal is accomplished he or she will feel satisfied for being able to master the goal.

Gender Roles

For many years, a woman's place was considered in the home. The man's role was to support the family with his job, while the woman's role was to raise the family and keep the home in order. However, the clearly defined roles of men and women from the past have started to change. Women have started to have jobs, families, and their own incomes. In some families today, the traditional roles are even reversed. Women work and support the family while the men stay home, raise the children, and keep the home in order.

The behaviors and characteristics that are considered appropriate for each gender are called gender roles (Singleton, 1987). Social influences throughout a person's entire life form a

person's gender roles. Gender roles and gender stereotypes are two words that are used interchangeably, but it is important to note their difference. While gender roles are the behaviors and characteristics that are considered appropriate, gender stereotypes are the over-generalized beliefs about these behaviors and characteristics (Singleton, 1987). Essentially, the stereotypes become the roles and society enforces these roles because they become what are considered right. So, the belief that men are aggressive and women are docile is a gender stereotype and a gender role.

Gender roles start to form at a very early age. Children are shown by their parents, the people around them, and the media what is right and wrong. Gender schema theory, developed by Bem (1981), states that children observe their society and culture to determine the roles of men and women. Once they have this knowledge they internalize it and it becomes a core belief. Eventually, children will use their own self-concepts to determine what they believe is acceptable for a gender, but the original schema that was formed still plays a role.

Eccles' Expectancy Value theory (Wigfield, 1994; Wigfield & Eccles, 2000) is another theory that looks at past experiences and social and cultural factors that influence children. The theory states that people's beliefs in their own competence is not only determined by their past achievement experiences, but also by two other social and cultural factors. The first factor is cultural gender roles. Men are stereotyped as being more aggressive and women are stereotyped as being docile. These stereotypes tell men and women what is appropriate, or inappropriate, and can influence their beliefs about their own competence. Support for these results was also provided by a study by Munroe, Shimmin, and Munroe (1984). They found that as children develop cognitively, their understanding of gender and sex roles also develop. The second factor

is the behaviors and beliefs that are important in the person's life. If your mother is the stereotypical "housewife" then that is what you likely will believe is the role of a woman.

According to Social Cognitive Theory, self-efficacy develops in four ways, and one of these ways, social modeling, relates to gender. Gender segregation in jobs is a common example of social modeling. Nursing is considered a female profession. When growing up, boys and girls see that nursing is a predominately female field so they believe that only women are nurses. Male nurses are sometimes mocked and made fun of because they did not become doctors, which is considered a male field. As such, children grow up and are faced with these stereotypes, which can have a big effect on what they believe.

Other theories have examined the effect that society and culture has on perpetuating gender roles. Eagly's (1987) Social Role Theory states that society's expectations and a gender-based division of labor are based on stereotypes and produce gender roles. Role congruity theory, by Eagly and Karau (2002), states that women leaders who do not portray the communal characteristics are evaluated less favorably than male leaders and female leaders who do show communal characteristics. Male leaders are not held to the same expectations as women and they aren't given negative evaluations for not exhibiting communal characteristics.

A study by Brenner and Bromer (1981) using Barrett's Taxonomy of Leadership Behavior, investigated if male and female managers exhibited different leadership behaviors. In the study, 104 male and 72 female graduate students were asked to choose ten female types and ten male types from the list. The most agreed upon male stereotypes were aggressive, ambitious, analytical ability, competitive, consistent, desires responsibility, emotionally stable, forceful, leadership ability, logical, self-confident, objective, steady, well-informed, and no desire for

friendship. The most agreed upon female stereotypes were aware of feelings of others, cheerful, creative, helpful, humanitarian values, intuitive, modest, and sophisticated. Brenner and Bromer used these items to form the Agreement Scale for Leadership Behavior. Using this new scale, Brenner and Bromer selected 39 firms in New York City and asked managers to fill out a questionnaire rating leadership behaviors on the job on a scale from 1 (*least descriptive*) to 5 (*most descriptive*). The results showed that there was a significant preference for behaviors that reflect male stereotypes, regardless of the gender of the manager (Brenner & Bromer, 1981).

A study by Williams and Best (as cited in Matsumoto & Juang, 2007) looked at gender stereotypes across cultures. They sampled 3,000 individuals from 30 countries. Participants looked at the Adjective Check List and were asked to decide if each adjective was female or male. If the consensus across cultures was two-thirds or better than the item described either male or females. Out of the 300 words on the Adjective Check List, 100 were agreed upon. Aggressive, bossy, capable, determined, greedy, opportunistic, show-off, individualistic, and inventive were some of the words used to describe men. Dependent, fickel, gentle, kind, mild, shy, pleasant, nervous, intelligent, unstable, warm, weak, worrying, emotional, and curious were some of the words used to describe women. This study shows that even across cultures men are considered the more dominant sex, and women are considered the weaker sex.

In summary, there are two types of goal orientations. The first orientation is called mastery orientation. A mastery orientation is characterized by a person's desire to improve his or her abilities and master the tasks he or she performs for his or her own benefit. The second orientation is performance orientation and it is divided into performance-approach and performance-avoidance. Performance-approach is characterized by a person's desire to achieve a

positive evaluation of his or her current abilities and performance from others. A person who is performance-approach oriented has a strong desire to appear superior to his or her peers. Performance-avoidance is when a person avoids tasks that they think they may fail. This person avoids failure because they do not want others to know that they performed poorly on a task.

It is important to note here why gender roles are being used instead of gender. The results on the relationship between gender and goal orientation have been inconclusive. Half of the studies demonstrate that there is a relationship, and the other half of the studies demonstrate that there isn't a relationship between gender and goal orientations. Thus, it appears that there may be some other factor influencing the relationship between gender and goal orientation, perhaps gender roles. It could be the case that the person's actual gender does not have an effect on their goal orientation, but the gender role that the person adopts does. For instance, a female that adopts a masculine gender role might have one goal orientation while a female that adopts a feminine gender role has another goal orientation. The gender the two people actually posses is irrelevant since it is the same, rather the gender role that the two people identify with is what is affecting their goal orientation.

However, due to the fact that gender roles have yet to be examined in relation to goal orientation it was necessary to use previous findings on gender as the basis for my hypotheses. For example, Hyde and Durik (2005) in a review of many studies found that males were more approach oriented and females were more avoidance oriented. Much of the research discussed above found that women were more mastery oriented than men (Middleton & Midgley, 1997; Anderman & Young, 1994; Patrick et al., 1999). My hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: People who score high on the femininity scale will be positively related to mastery orientation and performance-avoidance orientation

Hypothesis 2: People who score high on the masculinity scale will be positively related to performance-approach orientation.

Method

Participants

Participants in the study were 591 undergraduate students enrolled in psychology courses at a large Southeastern university. Students selected this study from a variety of studies offered via an online website maintained by the psychology department. Students are required to participate in studies via the online website as part of a course requirement for psychology classes, or as extra credit. A misinterpretation of the results required 126 students to be dropped from the analysis. Specifically, these students provided answers that were outside of the range of the correct response format (e.g., on one survey students were asked to respond using a 1 to 5 scale, but provided responses such as 35, 67, etc., to all of the items) As there was no way to interpret these responses, these students were dropped from the study. This left 465 students to be used for analyses.

Materials

The student's goal orientation was measured using the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scale (Midgley et al., 2000; see Appendix A). This instrument consists of 14 self-report questions which measure whether the student is concerned with mastering a task or appearing superior to peers in the classroom. The items utilize a 5-point Likert scale response format, which generates ratings for mastery orientation, performance-approach orientation, and performance-avoidance orientation. In this study, good internal consistency was reported for the mastery orientation (.85) and performance-approach orientation (.89). An acceptable internal consistency was reported for performance-avoidance orientation (.74).

There were fourteen questions on the PALS survey (Midgley et al., 2000). The possible ranges of scores for each orientation were 1 to 5. Five questions on the PALS survey are aimed

at determining a person's mastery orientation, five questions are aimed at determining a person's performance approach orientation, and four questions are aimed at determining a person's performance avoidance orientation. The mean of each orientation was found to determine a person's score. For example, for person A the score on each question that makes up mastery orientation was added together and then divided by 5. This resulting number is person 1's score on mastery orientation.

Gender role identification was measured using Bem's Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974; see Appendix B). The inventory lists 60 adjectives and asks respondents to rate the adjectives on a 7-point Likert scale. The scale requires students to assess how accurately the adjective describes them. Bem's (1974) normative research returned good reliability for masculinity at .86 and femininity at .80 to .82. Test-retest reliability by Bem (as cited in, Robinson, Shaver, & Wrightsman, 1991) for a 4-week time period reported good reliability for masculinity and femininity at .90. When the test-retest was lengthened to a 4-year period, the reliability dropped for masculinity to.56 and for femininity to.68 (Robinson et al., 1991). Overall, the reliability of the Sex Role Inventory has been shown to be good. Harris (1994) tested the validity of the Sex Role Inventory. There are 20 masculine traits and 20 feminine traits and he found that 19 masculine traits and 16 feminine traits fit the criteria used by Bem. Harris believed that the Sex Role Inventory was a valid indicator of masculinity and femininity. Another study by Holt and Ellis (1998) also assessed the validity of the Sex Role Inventory. All 20 of the masculine traits were correctly identified and 18 of the feminine traits were correctly identified. In my study, a good internal consistency was reported for femininity (.85) and masculinity (.89).

There are 60 questions on the Bem's Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974). The possible ranges of scores for each gender role are 1 to 7. Twenty questions are aimed at determining a

person's masculinity score, twenty questions are aimed at determining a person's femininity score, and twenty questions are aimed at determining a person's androgynous score. The mean of each gender role was found to determine a person's score. For example, for person A the score on each question that makes up masculinity was added together and then divided by 20. This resulting number is person 1's score on masculinity.

Procedure

Students were invited by their professors to sign up for experiments on the online website, usually as a class requirement or for extra credit. The first question required students to select "I agree" to the informed consent before they were able to continue with the rest of the questionnaire. Once the student selected "I agree," he or she completed the questionnaire. After completion of the questionnaire, the student signed out of the website and he or she was awarded credit for completing the study.

Results

First, I calculated descriptive statistics for the different measures of masculinity, femininity, mastery orientation, performance approach orientation, and performance avoidance orientation (Table 1).

Table 1

Descriptive statistics for all scales

	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Masc	4.89	.81	2.37	7.00
Fem	4.82	.72	2.30	6.60
Mastery	4.21	.72	1.00	5.00
PerfrAp	2.70	1.02	1.00	5.00
PerfAv	3.02	.94	1.00	5.00

The first hypothesis was that people who score high on the femininity scale will be positively related to mastery orientation and performance-avoidance orientation. Femininity was significantly related to mastery orientation, r (463) =.17, $p < .01$. This indicated that people who scored higher on the femininity scale were also higher on mastery orientation. Femininity was also significantly related to performance-avoidance, r (463) = .12, $p < .01$. This indicated that people who scored higher on the femininity scale were also higher on performance-avoidance (Table 2). It is important to keep in mind that all of the correlations are weak so any conclusions made from the correlations should be interpreted with caution.

Table 2

Correlations between Masculinity, Femininity, Mastery Orientation, Performance-Approach Orientation, and Performance-Avoidance Orientation.

	Mastery	PerfAp	PerfAv
Masc	.269**	.201**	.082*
Fem	.173**	.116*	.120**

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

An exploratory analysis was completed to examine the data further. First, the relationship between masculinity and mastery orientation was calculated, r (463) = .27, $p < .01$. This was compared to the relationship between femininity and mastery orientation from above. The Williams t test showed that the relationship with mastery orientation and masculinity was stronger than the relationship between mastery orientation and femininity, t (463) = 1.72, $p < .05$. This was contradictory to my first hypothesis.

A second exploratory analysis was completed to compare the relationship of masculinity and performance-avoidance with the one obtained between femininity and performance-avoidance. First, the relationship between masculinity and performance-avoidance was calculated, r (463) = .082, $p < .01$. This was compared to the relationship between femininity

and performance-avoidance from above. The Williams t test showed that the relationship between masculinity and performance-avoidance was not stronger than the relationship between femininity and mastery orientation, t (463) = -1.48, $p > .05$.

The second hypothesis was that people who score high on the masculinity scale will be positively related to performance-approach orientation. There was a significant relationship between masculinity and performance-approach, r (463) = .20, $p < .01$. This indicated that people who score higher on the masculinity scale were also higher on the performance-approach. It is important, once again, to keep in mind that all of the correlations are weak so any conclusions made from the correlations are also weak.

A third exploratory analysis was calculated to compare the relationship of femininity and performance-approach with the one obtained between masculinity and performance-avoidance. First, the relationship between femininity and performance-approach was calculated, r (463) = .116, $p < .01$. This was compared to the relationship between masculinity and performance-approach from above. The Williams t test showed that the relationship between masculinity and performance-approach orientation was not stronger than the relationship between femininity and performance-approach orientation, t (463) = -.66, $p > .05$.

Discussion

Each gender role had a significant positive relationship with mastery orientation, but the relationship between masculinity and mastery orientation was significantly stronger than the relationship between femininity and mastery orientation. This was not what I predicted in my hypotheses, and was a surprising result since this is not what is generally found in past literature (Middleton & Midgley, 1997; Anderman & Young, 1994). There are two reasons for why this might have happened.

The first one is the rationale I used for developing my hypotheses. There are no known previous studies concerning goal orientation and gender roles so the hypotheses were developed using past results of studies concerning goal orientation and gender. Since males and females make up each gender role, the usual occurrences in gender studies might not be relevant. I cannot know this for certain since demographic data were not collected, but it is a possibility to consider.

Another possibility is that there were unequal numbers of each gender represented under each gender role. For instance, there could be more females than males adopting the masculine gender role, which is the reason masculinity and femininity both had a positive relationship with mastery orientation. Once again, the lack of demographic data prevents me from knowing this, but it is another possibility to consider.

Another important factor to consider is the relationship the scales have with each other. Correlations were calculated to determine the relationships between the scales. All of the scales were not strongly correlated with each other except for performance-approach and performance-avoidance (Table 3). This is not surprising based on past research and the fact that originally performance orientation was one variable that was later split into two variables. For example

Middleton and Midgley (1997) found that performance-approach was positively relatedavoidance behaviors. This study showed that in some cases performance-approach and performance-avoidance can be highly correlated.

Table 3

Descriptive statistics for all scales

	Fem	PerfAp	PerfAv
Masc	.21		
Mastery		.14	.082
PerfrAp			.753

There was a positive and significant relationship between femininity and performance-avoidance. This means that a person high in femininity is also highly concerned with avoiding tasks at which he or she may fail. This is not a surprising result when one considers some of the words that make up the femininity gender role: shy, sensitive to other's needs, soft-spoken, gullible, and gentle. All of these words suggest someone who does not like the spotlight for a good, or bad, reason. A person with these characteristics would be afraid of attempting a task where failure may occur if other people are going to see the failure.

There was a positive and significant relationship between masculinity and performance-approach. This means that a person high in masculinity is also highly concerned with appearing superior to his or her peers. This is also not a surprising result when one looks at the words that make up the masculine scale: athletic, strong personality, forceful, dominant, and competitive.

These words represent a person who likes to do well and who also likes to make sure that everyone knows he or she is doing well.

As I have already stated, demographic data were not collected in this study. The main reason for this was collecting demographic data before participants filled out the questionnaire measuring their sex role identification could cause a social desirability bias. If a female is filling out the questionnaire and checks the female box at the beginning of the questionnaire she might answer the questions within the questionnaire to make her appear more female. Just because a person believes that he or she possesses more masculine qualities does not mean that he or she will admit that he or she possesses those qualities.

Another factor to consider is fear of success. Past research (Crawford & Marecek, 1989; Bartholomew & Schnorr, 1994) has found that women have a fear of success. Specifically, women will hide their abilities and avoid being successful at a task if they think it will cause negative consequences for them. Negative consequence can be anything from looking less feminine to people disapproving of one's actions. In this study, the masculine participants related to mastery orientation and performance-approach orientation. Research has shown that both of these orientations are aimed at attaining competence which facilitates task engagement and fosters intrinsic motivation. Feminine participants related to performance-avoidance, which is harmful to intrinsic motivation. Performance-avoidance elicits anxiety and causes people to try and withdrawal from situations (Elliot and Harachiewicz, 1996). The results in this study support the idea of fear of success.

Limitations

One potential limitation is that demographic data were not collected. As stated before, these data were not collected for a specific reason. It is possible, though, that by not collecting

the demographic data valuable information is missing. Having the demographic data could help to explain the results that are conflicting with past studies. In the future, putting the demographic data questions at the end of the questionnaire would most likely not alter a participant's answers and would allow the researcher to have valuable information.

Another potential limitation is the generalizability of using college students as participants. The nature of a college setting is that students must get good grades to get into college, then more good grades to stay in college and pass classes, and then good grades to find a job after graduation. This can pressure students, and may lead them into believing that performance is the important factor. This focus on grades and performance can, in turn, cause students to focus less on learning and understanding material in class and focus more on getting an A by any means possible. For this reason, it was feared that the results of the study would not show much of a mastery orientation. The results, however, indicated that this was not a problem.. There are a few reasons for why this could be true. One could be that while reading the questions students fell into the trap of social desirability bias and tried to answer the questions based on what they thought sounded best. Another reason for this could be that students are taking classes that they enjoy so they also enjoy learning and are not focused on the grade. Regardless of the reason, the idea that a college setting is not ideal for mastery orientations should be kept in mind for future research.

Conclusion

It is important, once again, to keep in mind that all of the correlations are weak so any conclusions made from the correlations are also weak. Overall, higher masculinity leads to a higher motivation to succeed. This was a surprising finding in that it is contradictory to past research. There are two main reasons for why this could have happened: the amount of each

gender represented under each gender role and the rationale used for developing my hypotheses. Another important result is that higher femininity leads to higher motivation to avoid failure. This is not surprising when you consider that past research has shown that women have a fear of success. The backlash that a woman might receive for outperforming others has caused women to avoid tasks that they might succeed at.

The main implication of this study for organizations is that when determining a person's goal orientation it is not always as simple as gender. A person's gender role identification plays an important factor in his or her goal orientation. This is most evident in the fact that masculinity leads to a higher motivation to succeed than femininity. Organizations should keep this in mind when trying to determine their employees goal orientations.

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Appendix A

Patterns of Adaptive Learning Scale

Here are some questions about yourself as a student. Please circle the number that best describes what you think. Answer the question on a scale of 1 (not at all true) to 5 (very true).

1. It's important to me that I learn a lot of new concepts this year.
2. It's important to me that other students in my class think I am good at my class work.
3. It's important to me that I don't look stupid in class.
4. One of my goals in class is to learn as much as I can.
5. One of my goals is to show others that I am good at my class work.
6. One of my goals is to keep others from thinking I'm not smart in class.
7. One of my goals is to master a lot of new skills this year.
8. One of my goals is to show others that class work is easy for me.
9. It's important to me that my teacher doesn't think that I know less than others in class.
10. It's important to me that I thoroughly understand my class work.
11. One of my goals is to look smart in comparison to the other students in my class.
12. One of my goals is to avoid looking like I have trouble doing the work.
13. It's important to me that I improve my skills this year.
14. It's important to me that I look smart compared to others in my class.

Appendix B

Bem's Sex Role Inventory

Rate yourself on each item, on a scale from 1 (never or almost never true) to 7 (almost always true)

1. self reliant
2. yielding
3. helpful
4. defends own beliefs
5. cheerful
6. moody
7. independent
8. shy
9. conscientious
10. athletic
11. affectionate
12. theatrical
13. assertive
14. flatterable
15. happy
16. strong personality
17. loyal
18. unpredictable
19. forceful
20. feminine
21. reliable
22. analytical
23. sympathetic
24. jealous
25. leadership ability
26. sensitive to other's needs
27. truthful
28. willing to take risks
29. understanding
30. secretive
31. makes decisions easily
32. compassionate
33. sincere
34. self-sufficient
35. eager to soothe hurt feelings
36. conceited
37. dominant
38. soft spoken
39. likable
40. masculine
41. warm
42. solemn
43. willing to take a stand
44. tender
45. friendly
46. aggressive
47. gullible
48. inefficient
49. acts as a leader
50. childlike
51. adaptable
52. individualistic
53. does not use harsh language
54. unsystematic
55. competitive
56. loves children
57. tactful
58. ambitious
59. gentle
60. conventional